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**SCHOOL AND CHURCH**

BY GEORGE M. BUTLER

There has long existed in American life a good deal of sentiment about "the little red school house."

For a number of generations our preachers, poets, orators, not to speak of the occasional political stump speaker, have extolled this institution as the bulwark of our liberties and the maker of men.

And we still believe that to be essentially true, though we may now say less about it and may even be allowing these same little red school houses to die of starvation and neglect. Nevertheless, we still have the tradition of the basic value of the school house to American life. Education, however interpreted, we maintain to be essential to the permanence and well-being of the Republic.

In a similar way we have had a sentiment in American life about the Church. Sometimes it has been the little white meeting house which was reared hard by the little red school house. Yonder it has stood, its short square tower set upon the roof tree of four plain walls, or its long graceful spire extending upward against the sky, ever showing the way which men should go. At other times the Colonial meeting house has given place to the more ornate and symbolic structures of an earlier ritualistic order. And in these still later years we have seen the practical and utilitarian spirit possessing church architecture and fashioning it in accordance with the new age. But in any case, for generations past, the Church, like the school, has been regarded as one of the bulwarks of the state. And even when men have personally abandoned connection with it for one reason and another, or for no reason at all, they have for the most part still regarded it as an essential force in the well-being of the Republic. But, moreover, these two institutions, the school and the church, have existed side by side, both literally and in significance. Indeed, each has often created the other. Men of religious mind, upon founding a community, established a school. They demanded educational facilities as a part of their religious convictions. Similarly school men demanded a place of worship as an essential thing in culture. The first ministers of religion were teachers and educational founders and more than one clergyman's money and books have gone to the creation of a college or Christian academy. For years most of the schools

were administered by ministers of religion. The most notable college presidents in America have been doctors of divinity.

So also the schoolmen, the professors and teachers, were naturally found in the church as members and supporters. And this interplay of interest and influence went on for a number of generations. But then came changes. The public school system in America, considering the population, inevitably made for a separation of church and school. The public school as a function of the state must seem to favor no particular religious institution. And so this basic institution in the Republic has inevitably grown away from all organic relation to the church. So much so that the Roman Catholic branch of the church has regarded it necessary to re-establish a lost connection by means of parochial schools, furnishing an admittedly poorer education than the state affords.

The Protestant branch has had a somewhat different experience. It has experienced the separation, but the process differed. This branch of the church in its own way was also conservative, while the school was progressive. It stood for the maintenance of knowledge and fact once derived, while the school has stood for the constant acquiring of new knowledge and fact. From this arose distrust on one side and impatience or revolt on the other. This fact can be stated briefly, although it was a long time occurring. Enough to say the church and the school, whether public or private, have grown apart. There is not today that close interplay of interest and influence which once existed. The minister of religion and the minister of education do not walk together as they once did.

There are some schools dominated by church influence, but there are vastly more having no vital relation and desiring none.

Less and less are school administrators taken from the ranks of the church's ministry. Less and less are the boards of trustees required to have any percentage of clerical members, as in days past. The Carnegie Foundation has tended to help on the growing separation of school and church. Thus they go their separate ways. And with what results? With the result that each institution has suffered. The school has too often lost the backgrounds and perspectives of reverence and faith and spiritual feeling which the church offers. The church has too often lost the open-minded vision, the love of light and truth and modesty, the power for progress which the school affords.

Thus there has come to be a loss of intercommunication, sometimes a great gulf fixed between these two bulwarks of the state.

Now to go into all the causes of or possible remedies for the apparent situation is beyond the purpose of this article. The desire is rather, having stated the fact, to plead for some sort of a renewal of the former relation of school and church in terms suitable to our day. Doubtless it would be undesirable, as it is impossible, to reproduce conditions as they existed when our educational institutions and our churches in America were founded. It is doubtful, also, if under present conditions we can expect to establish close organic relations between our American schools and any or all of the sectarian religious institutions as such.

Yet what is to hinder these two great bodies of influence from getting together and working together as they once did for the welfare of the state?

One can see no danger in having the ministers of education and the ministers of religion conferring at least upon the fundamental problems of human life in a democracy.

In meeting with one another and now and again putting their institutions alongside of common public matters of morals and religion and education. Why should not, at least, our private secondary schools and our endowed colleges and universities be willing to link themselves up to the local religious institutions for purposes of mutual helpfulness in the instruction of youth, the search after truth, the social good of mankind? This need not mean dominance or conflict on either side; but a generous and effective partnership in the things of the spirit. Each needs what the other may have to give and both together can do much for the community. A vital relation between the church and the school is greatly needed today. Too often the church is afraid of the school as a destructive force and too often the school despises the church as a back number. Side by side they may even exist today physically, as of yore, but really know little of each other and care less.

The schools of America are languishing for the moral and material support which the Christian churches could give them, and the churches of America are dead with ancient dogmas, narrow vision and small interests from which the schools might free them, if there could be a getting together of these two nat-

ural allies. It would be a good thing for the church could her philanthropies undergird many a struggling institution of learning without thinking of ecclesiastical control. In earlier days Christian men of Christian churches sent their money out to plant schools all over the land, and teachers also to serve in them. It was regarded as altruistic work—a part of the missionary expression. Today, many schools still need money and teachers, but even more they need the assured knowledge and support in all possible ways of those of the churches whose fathers founded them.

The ministers of religion, the pastors of Christian churches, have too often given up their old prerogatives as educators and become merely managers of ecclesiastical plants. They are following a fatal path. One even ventures to think that the minister has not altogether lost his former usefulness as a school administrator or member of a board of trustees. The matter has gone far when the school dislodges the profession from its ancient place of influence in academic halls. Some clergymen are as good administrators and men of affairs for a modern school as can be found anywhere. A recent survey by the American Education Department of the Interchurch World Movement reveals that in a large number of secondary schools of New England there is not a single minister on the faculty or board of trustees. Is this desirable? Should there not at least be one professional sky pilot among those who are steering the craft of young lives?

So, too, the schoolmen, as has already been said, have often abandoned the church. The younger faculty members in numerous instances are indifferent if not hostile to organized religion. They have often become confessedly mere purveyors of knowledge, transmitters of scientific facts, trainers for the industrial games, not keepers of the springs of reverence and confession and prayer, but keepers of the springs of social and commercial power. As if cotton and sugar really were, as indeed they now seem to be, the dominant factors in American life! One would therefore plead that the preachers and the teachers gather again at some common fireside as in days of old. That the conferences of the churches and their ministers welcome again to their meetings the associations of college presidents and faculties and secondary schoolmen. That they find a new working basis of fellowship and co-operation in the new age. There is so much

at stake today depending upon these two forces of school and church. American life, its youth, its ideals, its whole future as to good morals and sound learning, is dependent as never before upon the wise counsels, the vigorous partnership, the broad vision and union of these two servants of the state. What is now needed is intelligent conference, mutual understanding, appreciative partnership. It is to be hoped that one great result of the Interchurch World Movement, which seeks to find out through the Education Department what the schools of America are doing or might be doing to train Christian leaders for the great tasks of the new day, will be to help reconnect, in some vital way, these two great agencies, which have in so many cases walked in separate ways in these latter days. That once again the little red school house of song and story, and the little white meeting house of faith and sentiment may stand again in the new day, as in days gone by, side by side.

#### **THE EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGN OF THE UNITED STATES BUREAU OF EDUCATION**

At the National Citizens' Conference on Education held in Washington, May 19-21, 1920, in which ambassadors to the United States, officers of the Federal Government, governors of states and representative citizens from all sections of the country participated, it was decided that a campaign of education about education was imperative. The United States Bureau of Education was authorized to inaugurate this campaign immediately and carry it on to a successful conclusion.

As a further step in the development of the campaign plans a National Conference on Educational Campaigns was held on June 25 at Washington under the leadership of the Bureau of Education which was participated in by representatives of numerous national and patriotic organizations which have more or less well developed Departments of Publicity. A special committee of this conference consisting of Albert G. Bauersfeld of the Vocational Education Association of the Middle West, Miss Florence King, representing the National Woman's Association of Commerce, and Robert L. Kelly, representing the Council of Church Boards of Education made the following report which was unanimously adopted.

The representatives of the various organizations meeting on June 25, 1920, at the call of the United States Commissioner